

# Blessed People of God

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*[Matt 5: 1-12] And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. 2 Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

These verses are often referred to as “the beatitudes,” which are the attributes of God’s blessed people. The Ten Commandments define what to do and what not to do as God wanted the people of Israel to be an example to other peoples in the world. In the ‘sermon on the mount,’ Lord Jesus defines the attributes of God’s people that God expects to find in them above and beyond the Ten Commandments. In these verses, Lord Jesus emphasizes the blessedness of God’s people, the characteristics of their hearts and lives, and the blessings they receive from God.

When we were students in high school in South Korea as teenagers, we studied for the college entrance examinations without knowing the problems on the exam. However, through these verses, Lord Jesus is laying down the criteria for winning God’s favor and blessings. He has revealed to us what questions will be on the college entrance examination. And now, it is up to you to work to attain these attributes. What is wonderful is that God provides a divine tutor, the Holy Spirit of God, to help us with our preparations. So, let us examine the attributes one by one to know them well. That will help us with our preparation work.

In verse 3, He says, “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.*” Being poor materially has nothing to do with going to heaven. It is the condition of your heart and spirit, that you ponder on your heart and life and see spiritual poverty and come to God in humility to obtain spiritual treasures, which are liberally available to you through the holy word of God, the ministry of God’s servants, and the help of the Holy Spirit as you seek to be close to God through prayers and meditations. The blessings that come at the end of the beatitude sentences, such as “for theirs is the kingdom of God,” collectively describe the divine blessings shared by God’s people. So, the first gift of God is citizenship of God’s kingdom, which is granted to each of His people whose attributes are defined in the beatitudes.

In verse 4, we read “*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*” We mourn for the loss of a family member or close relation or friend. But have you ever mourned for yourself – for your sinful condition, realizing that you have been living totally outside of God, that you have been listening to wrong voices that kept you away from the love of God, that your life has been like a wilderness or desert, craving for the living water of God to satiate your soul? If you are mourning for yourself in this sense, God will receive you into His kingdom despite your sinfulness because Jesus died and shed blood for your sins. And He will love you as one of His children and there, in His bosom, you will find comfort and rest. This is the portion for all of God’s children.

In verse 5, we read “*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.*” The definition of ‘meek’ in the Greek word is ‘power under control.’ The meekness spoken here does not mean weakness or cowering under an unjust power. Rather, it is like how God has been restraining His displeasure and indignation although He sees the evil and injustice that are wantonly committed by the wicked people on the earth. When God’s people confront injustice from ungodly people, they restrain their anger and temper. Rather, they show kindness and spirit of help to sinful persons just as Jesus forgave those who condemned Him and crucified Him on Calvary, saying “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Such people will be the rulers in the coming Millennial Kingdom

together with the King of kings, Lord Jesus Christ. And they will live forever with God and Christ in the new heaven and new earth that will come after the Millennial Kingdom.

In verse 6, we read *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”* We see around us those who have no interest in God’s justice on earth. They see the wrongs in our society and simply ignore them as facts of life. But true people of God are grieved in their hearts and there is constant hunger and thirst for God’s justice, wanting to know what is true and right in the eternal sense. What the world offers does not satisfy such persons’ hearts. And they cry out to God to show them what the true purpose of life is. Material things do not bring true satisfaction to their hearts. And they yearn to be filled with the truth of God. Yes, Lord Jesus promised that such hearts’ yearnings will surely be satiated because they come to drink freely the living water that wells up within their hearts. Such a miracle happens when God plants in their hearts an artisan well of living water that flows from the throne of God in heaven.

In verse 7, we read *“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”* God is merciful to those who show mercy to others. God’s children show mercy because they are born again with the divine nature of being merciful during the period of grace and mercy. The time for God’s retribution against the wicked and unbelieving is coming. Until then God’s mercy and grace are extended to all people, even the unbelieving. His people, therefore, show mercy toward their neighbors, even those who are unkind, biased, cruel, and wicked, not just to obtain God’s mercy but because they have been born with the Christlike nature of forgiving and merciful. So, when Christians go to heaven, they will all be forgiven people. Therefore, they will sing of giving honor, glory, and praise to the God who has been merciful to them through Jesus Christ.

In verse 8, we read *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”* God is spirit; therefore, no one can see God. However, God the Son came down to the world in a human form so that people could see Him, touch Him, and dine with Him. Those with pure hearts, whose single motive was to fear and honor God, could see Jesus as the Son of God, and believe Him so. People with pure hearts today can also believe in Jesus Christ and come to know Him in person as the Son of God. When they finish life’s journey and go to heaven, they will see God the Father on the throne and God the Son on the throne to the right of God the Father. So, we can see God today through the spirit and will see God with our own eyes in heaven.

God’s people are peacemakers because they have obtained true peace from God. This peace comes to them because the blood of Jesus Christ has bought the ransom for their sins, without which they would have fallen into hell. Realizing what great, undeserving peace and reconciliation they have received from God through the free will offering of Jesus Christ, they show peace in their dealings with their family and neighbors. This is also true in international affairs. God desires the leaders of the world to show a peace-making spirit toward one another, whereas Satan instigates powerful leaders to harbor enmity against their neighbors and resort to wars and conflicts rather than seek collaboration and harmony.

Finally, God’s children endure discrimination, ostracization, and persecution from the wicked and evil people of the world because they know that such will bring great rewards in heaven. They consider such harsh experiences here on earth as evidence of their profession as Christians and they highly value the privilege of sharing in the fellowship of suffering with Christ.

*“Almighty God our Father! We thank You that Lord Jesus taught us what kind of heart and spirit we ought to have as Your children. We know that You sanctify Your children so that they bear the marks of Jesus Christ in their lives, actions, and spirits. And we are thankful for the ministry of Your Holy Spirit, who teaches, guides, and protects us daily. We want to draw close to You through the Spirit so that we may grow spiritually toward the full image of Your Son, Jesus. May Your name be glorified through our humble service. In Christ’s name, Amen.”*

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